

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

PART I.

BY ORSON PRATT,

ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

The kingdom of God is an order of government established by divine authority. It is the only legal government that can exist in any part of the universe. All other governments are illegal and unauthorized. God, having made all beings and worlds, has the supreme right to govern them by his own laws, and by officers of his own appointment. Any people attempting to govern themselves by laws of their own making, and by officers of their own appointment, are in direct rebellion against the kingdom of God. The antediluvians were overthrown by a flood, because they rejected the government of the Almighty, and instituted their own governments in its stead. Noah and his family were the only loyal and obedient subjects to the legal power: they alone were saved. The universal desolation and utter abolishment of all the unauthorized man-made governments of the old world, should have been an everlasting warning to all future generations to avoid the same rebellion, and to establish no governments on the earth of human origin. But, alas? the posterity of Noah soon revolted from the only legal, rightful power, and set up for themselves forms of governments of their own inventions. The rebellion soon became so general, that all the inhabitants of the earth, except Melchizedek, Abraham, Lot, and a very few others, engaged themselves in it, supporting and upholding kings and other officers in their usurped authority, and suffering themselves to be governed by human laws, instead of revealed laws from God. From that time until the present, empires, kingdoms, principalities, republics, and numerous other corrupt, illegal, unauthorized powers, have multiplied themselves in the four quarters of the globe. At various times, during the last four thousand years, God has asserted his rights, and endeavoured to establish his own authority, his own laws, and his own government among the children of men. But so great was the opposition manifested by those illegal, rebellious powers, that his government while on earth was exceedingly limited in numbers. The vast majority of mankind made war against it—overcame, killed, and destroyed its officers and loyal subjects, until not a vestige of it was left remaining on the earth. For seventeen hundred years the nations upon the eastern hemisphere have been entirely destitute of the "*kingdom of God*,"—entirely destitute of a true and legal government—entirely destitute of officers legally authorized to rule and govern. All the emperors, kings, princes, presidents, lords, nobles, and rulers, during that long night of darkness, have acted without authority. Not one of them was called or anointed a king or prince by the God of heaven—not one of them received his office or appointment by him—not one of them has received revelations or laws from him—not one of them has received any communication whatsoever from the rightful sovereign, the Great King. Their authority is all assumed—it originated in man. Their laws are not from the Great Lawgiver, but the production of their own false governments. Their very foundations were laid in rebellion, and the whole superstructure, from first to last, is a heterogeneous mass of discordant elements, in direct opposition to the kingdom of God, which is the only true government which should be recognized on earth or in heaven.

The kingdom of God is a theocracy. And as it is the only form of government which will redeem and save mankind, it is necessary that every soul should be rightly and thoroughly instructed in regard to its nature and general characteristics. The beauty, glory, power, wisdom, and order of the kingdom of God may be more fully understood by a careful examination of the following subjects.

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First.—*The nature and character of the King.*

Second.—*The character and requisite qualifications of the subordinate officers.*

Third.—*The nature and character of the laws of adoption, or the invariable rule by which aliens are admitted into the kingdom as citizens.*

Fourth.—*The nature and character of the laws given for the government of all adopted citizens.*

Fifth.—*The character, disposition, and qualifications necessary for every citizen to possess.*

Sixth.—*The rights, privileges, and blessings enjoyed by the subjects in this life.*

Seventh.—*The rights, privileges, and blessings promised to the faithful, obedient subjects in a future life.*

Dear reader, your future well-being in all time to come, depends upon your rightly understanding these seven subjects. Read, therefore, with serious attention, and your mind shall be opened to see things that you never saw before; things too of infinite importance, without which you can in no wise be saved. Let us begin by examining—

First.—*The nature and character of the King.* God is the King. In him exists all legal authority. He alone has the right of originating a system of government on the earth. He claims this right by virtue of his having made man and the earth he inhabits. Man, therefore, is indebted to God for his own formation and for the formation of the planet on which he dwells. He also claims the right of establishing his government among men, by virtue of his superior wisdom and power. If God had sufficient wisdom and power to construct such a beautiful world as this, with all the infinite varieties of vegetables and animals appended to it; if he could form such an intricate and complicated piece of machinery as the human tabernacle as a dwelling-place for the human spirit, then we must admit that his wisdom and power are immeasurably greater than that of man, and hence he is qualified to reign as king. An order of government, established by such an all-wise, powerful being, must be good and perfect, and must be calculated to promote the permanent peace, happiness, and well-being of all his subjects. The great King is a very amiable being, full of benevolence and goodness, and never turns any person away empty, that comes requesting a favor which he sees would be for his benefit.

The King occasionally visited his subjects in ancient times, and once tarried with them for several years; but he received such cruel abuse from many of the people that he left them, and went to some other part of his dominions. Where the King is gone the people cannot tell. They have not heard one word from him for upwards of seventeen hundred years. He has been absent so long, that some of the people have doubted even his existence. They have argued that if he did exist, that some one would very likely have heard something from him in the course of so many centuries. Many millions however have some idea that he exists, and are constantly sending all kinds of petitions to him; but for some reason he sends no word back. No messengers are dispatched to the petitioners to give them any counsel upon any subject. It has become a very popular thing to send daily petitions to the King, and to appropriate one day out of seven for the especial purpose of sending in their petitions. The same petitions are frequently sent a great number of times. It is very unpopular however for any one to expect the King to make any reply to any petition sent in. Any one pretending to have received a reply would be counted a base impostor; for, say they, the King has spoken to no one for the last seventeen hundred years; no one has heard from him since he conversed with his servant John on the isle of Patmos. The King conversed very freely with his subjects in the early and middle ages; and some think it very strange that he has been silent so long. They have expended millions in building many costly and magnificent churches in honour of his name; but yet he has not deigned to grace one of them with a visit, neither has he condescended to send any tidings to them by a messenger or otherwise. He has not informed them whether he was pleased or displeased with their splendid edifices. His profound silence for so many centuries has caused many to think, that he was, for some reason, very angry with the people; yet they could not see why he should be angry when the people were doing so much to honor him—when they were expending millions to hire learned men to preach and write in such an eloquent manner about him.

Reader, can you tell why the King should be so distant? Why he holds no com-

munication with any of the people? Why he has not sent one sentence of consolation or counsel to them? Why he has suffered some fifteen thousand millions of the human race to fall into their graves, in the latter ages, without condescending to speak one word to any of them? There must be some cause for all this. There must be something wrong. The King never formerly served his people in this manner; and when he went away, he left word that if any of his people lacked wisdom or knowledge on any subject, they should send in their petition to him, and he would liberally send them the requisite information.

I will now tell you the reason why the King has kept silence so long. It is because he has had no subjects to converse with; all have turned away from him and advocated other governments as being the rightful and legal authority. They killed off, and utterly destroyed, every true subject of his kingdom, and left not a vestige of it upon the earth; and, to add to their guilt and wickedness, they have introduced idolatry in its worst forms, and utterly turned away from the true and living God. They have introduced a "God without BODY, PARTS or PASSIONS." They have had the audacity to call this newly-invented god by the same name as the God of the ancient Saints, although there is not the least resemblance between them. Indeed there could be no resemblance between them; for a bodiless god, without "parts or passions," could resemble nothing in heaven, on earth, or in hell. This imaginary modern god has become exceedingly popular. It is to him that a vast number of churches have been erected. It is not to the true and living God that they send forth petitions, but it is to this imaginary being. No wonder that they have received no communication from him! no wonder that he has not honoured them with a visit. As he has no "PARTS," he could neither be felt nor seen if he should visit them. Such a being could not speak, for he has no "parts" to speak with.

There have been various species of idolatry in different ages of the world. The sun, moon, stars, beasts, crocodiles, frightful serpents, images of wood, of stone, and of brass, have been erected into gods, and worshipped by innumerable multitudes. But the system of idolatry, invented by modern christianity, far surpasses in absurdity anything that we have ever heard of. One of the celebrated worshippers of this newly-discovered god, in his "Physical Theory of another Life," says, "A disembodied spirit, or, we would rather say, an unembodied spirit, or sheer mind, is NOWHERE. Place is a relation belonging to extension; and extension is a property of matter; but that which is wholly abstracted from matter, and in speaking of which we deny that it has any property in common therewith, can in itself be subject to none of its conditions; and we might as well say of a pure spirit that it is hard, heavy, or red, or that it is a cubic foot in dimensions, as say that it is *here* or *there*. It is only in a popular and improper sense that any such affirmation is made concerning the Infinite Spirit, or that we speak of God as *everywhere* present. God is in every place in a sense, altogether incomprehensible by finite minds, inasmuch as his relation to space and extension is peculiar to infinitude. Using the terms as we use them of ourselves, and extension is peculiar to infinitude. God is not *here* or *there*, any more than he exists *now* and *then*." This species of idolatry, according to the foregoing quotations, approaches so near to Atheism, that no one can tell the difference. Reader, can you see the difference? A god "without a body!" A god "without parts!" A god that cannot be "*here* or *there*!" A god that is "NOWHERE!" A god that cannot exist "*now* and *then*!" A god that exists in NO TIME! A god that has no extension—no "*parts*"—no conceivable relation to *time* or *space*! O, blush for modern christianity!—a pious name for Atheism! Some, perhaps, may think that I have not sufficient charity. But why should I have charity for a god that has no "*parts*"—no relation to space? Let him first have charity for himself. But this would be impossible; for he is a god "without passions." He can have no charity nor love for himself nor any one else. There is no danger of offending him; for a passionless god is not capable of anger. One of the persons of this imaginary god is said to have been crucified. But this must be a sad mistake; for it would be impossible to crucify a portion of something that had no "*parts*." The reason, then, why the people have not received any word from the Great King, is because they have petitioned the wrong god. Would you expect her majesty, the queen of England, to answer your petition if it were directed to some African prince? Would you expect the God of heaven to answer a petition that was

addressed to a Hindoo god? If, then, your petitions are addressed to the bodiless, passionless god of modern christianity, you must not be surprised if the true God does not pay any attention to them. You need not expect that the true God will make any reply to petitions offered to any other being.

The true God exists both in time and in space, and has as much relation to them as man or any other being. He has extension, and form, and dimensions, as well as man. He occupies space; has a body, parts, and passions; can go from place to place—can eat, drink, and talk, as well as man. Man resembles him in the features and form of his body, and he does not differ materially in size. When he has been seen among men, he has been pronounced, even by the wicked, as one of their own species. So much did he look like man, that some supposed him to be the carpenter's son. Like man, he had a Father; and he was the "*the express image of the person of the Father*." The two persons were as much alike in form, in size, and in every other respect as fathers and sons are of the human race; indeed, the human race are "*his offspring*," made in his likeness and image, not after his moral image, but after the image of his person. There is no such thing as moral image. Such an image cannot exist. Morality is a property of some being or substance. A property without a substance or being to which it appertains is inconceivable. A property can never have figure, shape, or image of any kind. Hence, a moral image never had an existence except in the brains of modern idolators.

The Godhead consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is a material being. The substance of which he is composed is wholly material. It is a substance widely different in some respects from the various substances with which we are more immediately acquainted. In other respects it is precisely like all other materials. The substance of his person occupies space the same as other matter. It has solidity, length, breadth, and thickness, like all other matter. The elementary materials of his body are not susceptible of occupying, at the same time, the same identical space with other matter. The substance of his person, like other matter, cannot be in two places at the same instant. It also requires *time* for him to transport himself from place to place. It matters not how great the velocity of his movements, *time* is an essential ingredient to all motion, whether rapid or slow. It differs from other matter in the superiority of its powers, being intelligent, all-wise, and possessing the power of self-motion to a far greater extent than the coarser materials of nature. "God is a *spirit*." But that does not make him an immaterial being—a being that has no properties in common with matter. The expression, "*an immaterial being*," is a contradiction in terms. Immateriality is only another name for nothing. It is the negative of all existence. A "*spirit*" is as much *matter* as oxygen or hydrogen. It has many properties in common with all other matter. Chemists have discovered between fifty and sixty kinds of matter; and each kind has some properties in common with all other matter, and some properties peculiar to itself which the others do not inherit. Now, no chemist, in classifying his substances, would presume to say—This substance is material, but that one is immaterial, because it differs in some respects from the first. He would call them all material, though they in some respects differed widely. So the substance called spirit is material, though it differs in a remarkable degree from other substances. It is only the addition of another element of a more powerful nature than any yet discovered. He is not a being "*without parts*," as modern idolators teach; for every whole is made up of parts. The whole person of the Father consists of innumerable parts; and each part is so situated as to bear certain relations of distance to every other part. There must also be, to a certain degree, a freedom of motion among these parts, which is an essential condition to the movement of his limbs, without which he could only move as a whole.

All the foregoing statements in relation to the person of the Father, are equally applicable to the person of the Son.

The Holy Spirit being one part of the Godhead, is also a material substance, of the same nature and properties in many respects, as the spirits of the Father and Son. It exists in vast immeasurable quantities in connexion with all material worlds. This is called God in the scriptures, as well as the Father and Son. God the Father and God the Son cannot be everywhere present; indeed they can

not be even in two places at the same instant: but God the Holy Spirit is omnipresent—it extends through all space, intermingling with all other matter, yet no one atom of the Holy Spirit can be in two places at the same instant, which in all cases is an absolute impossibility. It must exist in inexhaustible quantities, which is the only possible way for any substance to be omnipresent. All the innumerable phenomena of universal nature are produced in their origin by the actual presence of this intelligent, all-wise, and all-powerful material substance called the Holy Spirit. It is the most active matter in the universe, producing all its operations according to fixed and definite laws enacted by itself, in conjunction with the Father and Son. What are called the laws of nature are nothing more nor less than the fixed method by which this spiritual matter operates. Each atom of the Holy Spirit is intelligent, and like all other matter has solidity, form, and size, and occupies space. Two atoms of this spirit cannot occupy the same space at the same time, neither can one atom, as before stated, occupy two separate spaces at the same time. In all these respects it does not differ in the least from all other matter. Its distinguishing characteristics from other matter are its almighty powers and infinite wisdom, and many other glorious attributes which other materials do not possess. If several of the atoms of this Spirit should unite themselves together into the form of a person, then this person of the Holy Spirit would be subject to the same necessity as the other two persons of the Godhead, that is, it could not be everywhere present. No finite number of atoms can be omnipresent; an infinite number of atoms is requisite to be *everywhere* in infinite space. Two persons receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, do not each receive at the same time the same identical particles, though they each receive a substance exactly similar in kind. It would be as impossible for each to receive the same identical atoms at the same instant, as it would be for two men at the same time to drink the same identical pint of water. It is these three all-powerful substances that stand at the head of all legal government. All governments, not established by these three, will be ere long overthrown. They hold the supreme authority and power in heaven, and in the heaven of heavens, and throughout the wide expanse of universal nature. All principalities, powers, and kingdoms, whether in heaven or on earth, must yield to be instructed and controlled by the supreme power, or they cannot stand.

Second—*The character and requisite qualifications of the subordinate officers in the kingdom of God* are now to be considered. As the persons of the Father and Son cannot be everywhere present, it is therefore impossible for them to attend in person to all the multiplied affairs of government among intelligent beings; therefore, God, in establishing a government among such beings, has always called persons of their own number to officiate in his name. The character of these persons, previously to their calling and appointment, has generally been that of honesty and sincerity; otherwise they have not differed materially from other men.

The various officers, called of God to administer the affairs of his government, are apostles, prophets, bishops, evangelists, elders, pastors, teachers, and deacons. God has only one way of calling these different officers, and that is by *new revelation*. No person was ever authorized to act in the name of the Lord, unless called by *new revelation*. Paul says (Heb. v. 4), "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron." Among the vast number of national governments now upon the earth, where is there one that even professes to be the kingdom of God, or that its officers were called of God as was Aaron? Human authority and human calling are the only powers which any nation professes to have. But there are certain petty governments, called churches, organized within these national governments, which claim divine authority, and consider their officers authorized to act in the name of the Lord. But the great question is, have any of them been called as Aaron was? By *new revelation* Aaron was called. By *new revelation* the duties of his calling were made known. Have any of the Roman Catholic or Protestant officers been called by *new revelation*? Has God said one word to any of them? Do they not, with very few exceptions, declare that "There is no later revelation than the *New Testament*?" If the revelations contained in the New Testament are the last ones given, then the persons to whom they were given, were the last ones called of God. When *new revelation* ceases to be given, officers cease to be called of God. When the calling of

officers cease, the kingdom of God ceases to be perpetuated upon the earth. Nothing is more certain than that the church of God ceased to exist on the earth when new revelation ceased to be given. All the modern christian churches, who deny new revelation, have no more authority to preach, baptize, or administer any other ordinance of the gospel than the idolatrous Hindoos have; indeed all their administrations are worse than in vain—they are a solemn mockery in the sight of God. It is a grievous sin in the sight of God for any man to presume to baptize, unless God has authorized him by new revelation to baptize in his name. Saul, the king of Israel, lost his kingdom because he assumed the authority that did not belong to him. (1 Sam. xiii. 8—15.) Another king of Israel was smote with leprosy until the day of his death, because he attempted to administer an ordinance without being called and authorized. (2 Chron. xxvi. 16—22.) So all the baptisms and sacraments administered by modern christian churches who have done away new revelation, are an abomination in the sight of God. All persons who shall suffer themselves to be baptized, or partake of these ordinances through the administration of these illegal unauthorized persons, after having been duly warned of the evil thereof, will bring themselves under great condemnation before God, and unless they repent of that sin they can in nowise be saved. The twelve apostles were called by new revelation, but that did not authorize Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, nor any other person. Each one had to receive a separate call by new revelation for himself. No one could lawfully act under a commission given to some other person. All the commissions recorded in the New Testament were given to individuals then living, and not to any individuals who should live in some future age. If any persons would have authority, let them obtain a new commission from God, as his servants always did in ancient times, and if they officiate without such new commission, then know assuredly that they are impostors.

The subordinate officers in the kingdom of God must not only be called of God, but qualified to act in their respective offices. The first qualification absolutely necessary for every officer in the kingdom is, *the gift of the Holy Spirit*. This is the most important qualification of all others. No man, without this qualification, can attain to an office in the kingdom of God; it matters not how great his other attainments are; though he has studied the scriptures from a child, and committed them all to memory—though he has carefully learned the original languages in which they were written—though he has made himself master of all sciences—grasped with a comprehensive mind all the arguments set forth in theological works, yet none of these attainments will qualify him for even the least office in the kingdom of God. The unlearned youth, who had not the knowledge of the English alphabet, if he were called of God, and qualified by the gift of the Holy Spirit, would have more power and authority, and could do more towards saving men, than all the theologians and doctors of divinity that the world affords, unless they also were called of God, and endowed with the gift of the Holy Ghost. No other qualifications whatsoever can be substituted in the stead of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the great distinguishing characteristic between the officers of the kingdom of God and impostors. Every officer sent of God has a qualification that no impostor ever had or ever can have.

The first officers placed in the kingdom of God are apostles. Let us inquire how in ancient times this office was conferred on man. Jesus said to his ancient apostles (John xv. 16) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." Paul informs us (Heb. iii. 1.) that Jesus himself was an apostle. Holding the office himself, he had the most perfect right to confer the same calling upon others; hence he first *chose* them, and then "*ordained*" them; after this he sent them forth to preach (Matthew x) "and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Although these apostles were chosen, ordained, and sent forth on a particular mission to the cities of Israel, with power to work mighty miracles, yet there was an essential qualification which they had not yet received. They had received power sufficient to qualify them to preach that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand." But they had not yet received power sufficient to fully organize and build up that kingdom on the earth. They

lacked one very important qualification, without which they could never establish the kingdom which they had already predicted "was at hand." What was this further qualification which these apostles had not yet received? It was the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the other Comforter which Jesus promised them. It is very remarkable that these apostles should have such great power, and yet not have the Holy Ghost. But hear what the scripture saith, (John vii. 37, 38, 39), "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)." Mark the expression, "*the Holy Ghost was not yet given.*" This agrees with another saying of Jesus to his apostles (John xvi. 7). "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you." Jesus calls this Comforter the Holy Ghost (John xiv. 26.) After the resurrection of Jesus, and as he was about to be taken up into heaven, he said to his apostles (Luke xxiv. 49), "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you," (alluding to the Comforter or the Holy Ghost, which he promised several days before should be sent unto them from the Father after his glorification); "but," said he, "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Thus you see, dear reader, that these apostles had power to "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils," although the Holy Ghost was not yet given to them. A certain power was yet lacking. Jesus had commanded them saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." But he would not suffer them to commence this mission until the promise of the Father—the Holy Ghost—was given them. They already had power to work mighty miracles, but had not the power to build up the kingdom of God. This power they were to tarry for in Jerusalem, and when they should receive it, they were then to commence the duties of their mission, first, in the city of Jerusalem, and afterwards extend their labours to all nations. The power to work miracles is entirely a different thing from the power to build up the kingdom of God: the latter power, however, always includes the former, but the former power does not always include the latter.

We now ask, Where is there a man among all the churches of modern times, who has been called to the office of an apostle by *new revelation*? Where is there a man among all the millions of modern christians who has been ordained to the office of an apostle, under the hands of an apostle, as the Twelve were anciently? Where is there a man to be found among all the Catholics or Protestants who has been endowed with even the power of working miracles, to say nothing of the still greater power communicated in the gift of the Holy Ghost? If the apostles in ancient days could not build up the kingdom of God, without being endowed with these two degrees of power, surely no one since their day could be authorized to build the church of God with any less qualification.

One of the important duties required of an apostle is to **ADMINISTER THE SPIRIT**. In 2 Cor. iii. 6, we read that both Paul and Timothy were made "able ministers of the Spirit." The ordinance through which the Spirit is ministered, is **THE LAYING ON OF HANDS**. (Acts viii. and xix. Heb. vi.) To the apostles were entrusted three very important ministrations for the salvation of man:—

First.—*The ministration of the word.*

Second.—*The ministration of the baptism of water.*

And Third.—*The ministration of the baptism of the Spirit.*

While Jesus was with his apostles in person, they had power to minister the *word* and *water*, but not the *Spirit*, for they themselves had not yet been baptized with the Spirit: and they could not administer that which they were not in possession of? It was necessary that they should first receive the gift themselves, before they could confer it upon others. Hence we can perceive the propriety of Jesus commanding them to wait "at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high;" for without this additional power they could neither save themselves nor others. Many persons have flattered themselves, that they can be saved without the assistance of a minister sent of God. But this is a vain delusive hope; for Jesus hath expressly

fulness of the Father's glory, and the thief with him. But the scriptures expressly contradict this supposition. Peter says, in the third chapter of his first epistle, that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: *by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison*, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." From this we learn, that instead of Jesus going directly from the cross into his kingdom, he went to a certain "prison" where he found some "disobedient" "spirits" shut up, who had been there over two thousand years, or ever since Noah's flood. Jesus preached to them. Did the thief go with him? "To day thou shalt be with me in paradise." If Jesus went to preach in prison that day, the thief must have gone with him; hence paradise must mean a place of departed spirits, without respect to its being either a good or a bad place.

Christ, speaking of his own mission by the mouth of Isaiah, says, "He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." This agrees with Peter, as already quoted. Forasmuch, therefore, as the thief had never, to our knowledge, been born of the water and the spirit, he could not, according to the words of the Saviour to Nicodemus, "enter into the kingdom of God;" but he in all probability went that day with Jesus to the old antediluvian prison among the disobedient spirits, where he had the privilege of being preached to; that he and all the rest of the prisoners "might be judged according to men in the flesh." (1 Peter vi. 6.)

If the third "article of religion," believed by the church of England, be true, then the thief must have gone down into hell. This article reads thus:—

"III. *Of the going down of Christ into Hell.*—As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also is it to be believed that he went down into Hell."

If the thief went down into "prison," let every other unbaptized person beware, lest he go there too.

Since the apostles fell asleep, the simplicity and purity of the ancient gospel has been awfully perverted; its ordinances have been changed, especially the ordinance of baptism; while the ordinance of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, has been almost universally done away. No churches, either among the Papists or Protestants, have taught all the first principles of the gospel in their proper order. By this we know they are not the church of God. God is not with them. Their sins are not forgiven them. The Holy Ghost is not given to them. And they cannot be saved in the fulness of the glory of the Father's kingdom—neither they nor their fathers for many generations past. All have gone astray—far astray, from the ancient gospel. The church of Christ never existed on the earth without inspired apostles and prophets in it, who administered all the laws and ordinances of the gospel without any variation from the true and perfect pattern. But the apostate churches now on the earth, have neither inspired apostles, nor prophets, nor any other inspired officers among them, neither do they consider them necessary; and yet without inspiration or revelation—without immersion for remission of sins, or the ordinance for the gift of the Spirit,—they have the bold impudence to call themselves Christian Churches. But they have nothing to do with Christ, neither has Christ anything to do with them, only to pour out upon them the plagues written. He has not spoken to any of them for many centuries, neither will he speak to them, only in his wrath, and in the fierceness of his anger, when he riseth up to overthrow, to root up, and to destroy them utterly from the earth.

15, Wilton Street, Liverpool, November 30, 1848.

R. JAMES, PRINTER, 39, SOUTH CASTLE STREET.

MAR 12 1945

[No. 4.]

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

PART III.

BY ORSON PRATT,

ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

THREE important subjects relative to the kingdom of God have been already investigated in PARTS I AND II. We shall now proceed to the examination of the

Fourth,—namely, *The nature and character of the laws given for the government of all adopted citizens.*

After having complied with the rules of adoption, mankind are considered the legal citizens of God's kingdom; and as such, they are required to obey strictly all the laws, ordinances, statutes, commands, counsels, and words of the Great King; and in all things show themselves the faithful, honest, and loyal subjects of his government. That the citizens of the kingdom may be able to render strict obedience to its laws, they should make themselves thoroughly acquainted with them, and thus obey understandingly. Persons ignorant of the laws of the kingdom are liable to be deceived. They may suppose themselves obeying the law, when, in fact, they are only complying with some vain and foolish tradition of men. They are in constant danger of transgressing laws of which they are ignorant, and of neglecting to observe others that are of importance.

Millions of modern christians say they take the Bible as their "rule of faith and practice,"—that the Bible is their law. But we ask, what part of the Bible is the law of God unto man in this age? Is the history of the creation a law unto any one? Is the history of the building of the ark, or of the tower of Babel, or of Solomon's temple, a law or "rule of faith and practice" for the Saints now? Is the history of Abraham's travels—of the doings of Moses and Aaron—of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness—of the wars of Israel under the reign of their judges and kings—a law unto succeeding generations? Is the history of Jesus and the apostles a law binding upon the Saints of latter days? Must we be baptized in Jordan because John baptized there? Must we ride upon an ass-colt into Jerusalem because Jesus did? Must we scourge the people out of the Jewish temple because Jesus thought it necessary to do so? Must we build up churches in Rome, in Corinth, in Galatia, or in any other place, because the New Testament gives the history of such events? Is the history of any of the events recorded in either the Old or the New Testaments a law unto any man now living? No, it is not. The historical parts of the Bible, then, are not intended to govern the actions of modern christians.

Let us now inquire if all the laws, ordinances, and commands in the Bible are intended as our rule of faith and practice—as a law now binding upon us? God commanded Adam that he should not eat of the tree in the midst of the garden of Eden. Is this a law unto modern christians? No. God commanded Noah that he should build an ark of certain dimensions, and of a certain kind of wood; that he should take into the ark a certain number of beasts and fowls. Are these commands binding upon christians now? Surely not. God commanded Abraham to leave the land of Chaldaea and go into a land wherein he was a stranger. Must modern christians obey this command? Abraham was commanded to offer up his son Isaac. Is this a law of God's kingdom now? God commanded the Israelites to leave Egypt—to walk through the Red Sea—to pitch their tents in a certain way—to travel in a certain order—to build a tabernacle after a certain pattern which he gave them—to offer various animals and fowls as sacrifices. Are these commands, laws, or ordinances the Saints' "rule of faith and practice" in these days? They are not. God commanded the tribes of Israel to slay both men, women, and children—old and young. Must the Saints in all ages be governed by that command? No. God commanded Israel

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to encompass the walls of Jericho a certain number of times, blowing upon ram's horns. Is this a law or command to be observed now? Verily, no. Jesus commanded Peter to go and catch a fish in order to pay taxes. Is this command in force yet? Jesus commanded the apostles to tarry in Jerusalem a certain time, until they were qualified to preach. Must all other Saints wait in Jerusalem for a like qualification? An angel of the Lord commanded Philip to go into the south country; another angel commanded Cornelius to send for Peter; an angel commanded Joseph, the husband of Mary, to flee into Egypt, and, after tarrying there a certain time, an angel commanded him to return again to the land of Israel. Will any one pretend to say that any of these commands are to be observed now? There are many thousands of laws, commands, ordinances, and sayings, like the foregoing, both in the Old and New Testaments, that modern Saints cannot obey; indeed, it would be the height of delusion, and a great sin, to undertake to obey them *now*. Could any man remain guiltless and kill little infant children now, because such a command was given to Israel? No, he could not. The most of the commands and ordinances of the Bible were limited in their application, and were never intended to be binding upon future generations. Many were limited to single individuals, and they only were required to obey them; and when once obeyed, they were no longer binding upon those individuals nor any one else. Other laws in the Bible were given to govern all Israel for many generations; yet these also were limited to Israel, and were never intended to govern Gentile Christians. Most of the commands and laws in the Bible were given according to circumstances: as the circumstances were constantly changing, so the commands and laws were constantly changing to suit circumstances.

The moral law, however, never changes: it remains the same throughout all dispensations and ages. The Lord commanded Israel, saying, "Thou shalt not kill—thou shalt not steal—thou shalt not commit adultery," &c. These laws, with many others, never were intended to be done away, but wherever the kingdom of God is established, these laws exist in full force as rules of faith and practice. Many of the laws of Moses and the prophets, and of Jesus and the apostles, were moral in their nature, and never were intended to cease. The moral law, or law of righteousness, has been revealed anew in different generations and to numerous individuals. Once revealing this law did not seem sufficient, hence it was revealed afresh, and over and over again, in successive generations. Each inspired writer received *new revelations* upon this great unchangeable law; and, in addition to this, each in his turn revealed thousands of commands, laws, and ordinances suited to the conditions and circumstances of the people, which never were binding upon any but the individuals who received them, and to whom they were given.

Connected with the moral law, or the law which is intended to regulate the moral actions of men, there are certain ordinances which are intended as standing ordinances in the kingdom, such, for example, as the sacrament of the Lord's supper—the laying on of hands in the name of the Lord for the healing of the sick—and the anointing with oil for the same purpose. It might appear to some as superfluous for the Lord to reveal through successive prophets and inspired men the same things which he had previously revealed to former ages; but when we reflect upon the importance of being governed by righteous laws, and upon the frailty of man and his liability to forget God and his laws, we need not be surprised at this. It is certain that inspired men, in different ages, have revealed the same things anew, and have illustrated them in a great variety of ways, so as to impress the importance of them on the minds of men; as for example, how often mankind have been commanded through inspired men to worship no other god but the true and living God! How often have they been commanded through inspired men to keep the Sabbath day holy? Many of the laws given to Moses were often repeated again in the inspired writings of future prophets. Modern Christians suppose that the Bible contains sufficient revelation to save man. They argue "that the law of righteousness is clearly revealed in that book, and that more revelation would be superfluous." If, say they, "the Bible contains the gospel, why should another revelation of the gospel be given?" It is said, "if another gospel be revealed it must be false; if the same gospel be revealed it is useless, for we already have it in ancient revelations." They further argue, "that if mankind in ancient days could be saved by what was revealed to them, the same revelations will save man-

kind in these days," hence they suppose there is no need of any more. This objection urged by modern divines against new revelation being given in these days, might have been urged with the same propriety five thousand years ago; as, for examples, the antediluvian world might have used this argument against Noah's new revelations. They might have said that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, had sufficient revelation to save not only his spirit but his body also; and that Enoch knew of Christ, and prophesied that he "should come with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment," &c.; and that if, through the vast number of revelations he had received, he could be translated, body and spirit, into the abodes of immortality, why not we be saved by the same revelations without any new ones? Why, they might have said, do you, Noah, pretend to give new revelations, when your great grandfather Enoch had revelations enough to translate him? Cannot we be saved, as well as he, if we take Enoch's revelations as our "rule of faith and practice?" But, says the new-revelation-deniers of modern times, "Enoch's revelation said nothing about the flood and the ark, it was therefore necessary that more revelation should be given to warn the people of these events." Very well. May there not also be some judgments to escape, and important events to happen in our age, of which the ancient prophets have said nothing? And will not new revelation be equally as necessary to make known these unknown events that may happen in our day, as it was in Noah's day? After Matthew had been inspired to write the gospel, why was it necessary that Mark, Luke, and John should be inspired to write the same gospel? According to the arguments of the false teachers of modern times, if the last three evangelists revealed a different gospel from Matthew, it would be false, and if they revealed the same it would be useless, there being no necessity for the same thing to be revealed over again. If the revelation of the gospel by Matthew were sufficient to save men, why, according to their logic, should any further revelation be given? Why should Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude give new revelation, after Matthew had given sufficient to save himself and others? But, says the false teacher, it was necessary, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established, and once being established, there was no further need of revelation. In reply, we say, if *two or three* witnesses were sufficient, why did he give *eight* writers instead of two or three? We see no more impropriety in sending *eight hundred* inspired men, or *eight thousand* to write more revelation, than in sending *eight*.

Besides these eight inspired writers of the first century, vast numbers of others received revelations during that period, such as the prophet Agabus, the four daughters of Philip, and the numerous prophets among the Corinthians and other churches. Surely the Lord was not very particular to confine the spirit of revelation to *two or three* witnesses; neither was he very careful not to have the same things incorporated in the revelations of different men.

The inspired writings of the first century, though given at different times, and through different men, reveal the same gospel, teach the same law of righteousness, and declare the same ordinances; yet no one pretends to deny the usefulness of either or any of these inspired writings, because the same gospel, law, and ordinances had previously been revealed in some other writing. Each of these inspired writings are considered valuable, because they contain, not a different gospel or law, but different items of revelation which were once adapted to the different circumstances of individuals and churches to whom they were given. These ever varying items of revelation are valuable, not as a law or rule for the church in these days, but as matters of history. The revelation to Saul of Tarsus to "*arise and go into Damascus*"—the revelation to Ananias to "*arise and go into the street that is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul*"—the revelation to the prophets in the church at Antioch to "*set apart Barnabas and Saul to the work of the ministry*"—the revelation to Saul to "*make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem*," for the Jews would not receive his testimony, and numerous other like revelations, are valuable as matters of history only; for no one will have the absurdity to say that such revelations are binding upon any one else excepting the persons that received them. The history of God's revelations, ever varying to suit circumstances, is an encouragement for the Saints in the nineteenth century to seek after new revelations, like the ancients, which shall be adapted to the ever-varying and innumerable circumstances

with which they may be surrounded. It will do no good to read the history of the angel sending Philip into the south country to preach, unless ministers can be sent by revelation in these days into the right country or field of labour. It will be of no advantage to read the history of the revelations given through the prophets of Antioch, relating to the calling and ministry of Paul and Barnabas, unless there are prophets and revelations in these days to call men to the ministry in the same way. The history of other men's revelations, callings, and missions, would be of no more advantage to us than the history of a good dinner would be to a hungry man, or the history of the miraculous deliverance of the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace would be to a man perishing in the flames. Callings and missions in the nineteenth century require new revelations as much as in the first century. The history of others' callings, missions, and duties, under certain circumstances, gives no knowledge of our callings, missions, and duties under different circumstances. As well might we say to a hungry man that he has no need to eat in these days, as to say to the Saints they have no need of new revelation in these days. If a hungry man be told to read the history of the loaves and fishes on which others feasted, and be satisfied therewith, his appetite would be greatly increased, and he would desire to eat for himself; so if the Saint who is hungering and thirsting after righteousness be told to read the history of the innumerable revelations given to the ancient Saints, varied to suit their circumstances, and be satisfied therewith, it will greatly increase his desire to receive revelation for himself suited to his own circumstances.

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." This cannot mean every word which God has spoken in different ages; for it would be impossible to live by all the words of God spoken to Noah—to Abraham—to Moses—to the prophets and to the apostles. Thousands of words which God has given could be obeyed only by the very individuals to whom they were given. No other person could obey them. Man is to live by every word of God contained in those general laws which are given for the government of his kingdom in all ages; and he is also to live by every word which shall be given to him as an individual. In the latter case his circumstances may be such as to require vast numbers of new revelations suited to his condition. These revelations, no doubt, would greatly differ from any that were ever before given to man, or from any that would ever afterwards be given. No two individuals, churches, nations, or generations, are in the same condition; not even one individual is in the same circumstances in any two successive periods of his life. Consequently there is no period, nor year, nor generation, nor age wherein new revelations are not needed among the people of God. The nature and character of the laws given for the government of adopted citizens, then, are not only those which are binding on man in every age, but those new revelations which are given directly to the citizens from year to year during their own lives. When new revelations or laws are given for the benefit of a church or people, they are generally communicated through the prophets or other inspired officers of the church. When they are given to suit the circumstances of an individual, they are sometimes communicated through an inspired officer, as in the cases of Samuel's revelation to Saul—of Nathan's to David, and numerous other instances that might be named; and sometimes they are given directly to the individual himself, as in the case of the revelation to Cornelius, to Philip, to the shepherds, to the wise men of the east, to Anna, to Simeon, and to great numbers of others mentioned in sacred history.

It may be thought by some that a doctrine of continued revelation is a dangerous doctrine, calculated to deceive and mislead weak-minded persons to believe in anything and every thing pretending to be revelations. But let such persons reflect that God is the author of such doctrine; and it is not at all likely that he would establish continued revelation among his people if it were a dangerous doctrine. Can the wisest of our readers point out a people of God in any age of the world to whom he did not give continued revelations? Has God ever acknowledged any people or church as his own that did not receive new revelations for their own benefit? The danger, then, is all on the other side. The man who does not believe in *continued revelation* among the people of God, is already deceived and has not the religion of the Bible. By rejecting new revelation, he rejects one of the great fundamental principles by which the people of God in all ages are clearly distinguished from every other people. But the reader may ask, is there not danger of being deceived by false revelation? We reply, yes;

but shall we reject the true coin, because there is danger of being deceived with the spurious? Shall we reject all vegetable food because some vegetables are poisonous? Shall we reject the gift of the Holy Spirit, because there are many false spirits abroad among men? Shall we reject the doctrine of salvation through Christ, because there have been many false christ? Shall we reject new revelations from God, because there have been many false ones?

Every faithful upright person in the church or kingdom of God enjoys the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is a sure preventative against all deception. The Holy Spirit knows all things, and never deceives any one. Jesus said (see John xiv, xv, and xvi, chapters), "The comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you all things*, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, *he will guide you into all truth*: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and *he will shew you things to come*. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and *shall shew it unto you*." Perhaps some may suppose that this comforter which is called the Holy Ghost, was only to be given to the apostles; but Peter said to thousands on the day of Pentecost, that if they would repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, they should "*receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*;" and then to shew them that the promise of this gift was not limited to a few thousand persons, he says, in the next sentence, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This passage evidently proves that the promise of the Holy Ghost, was a promise universal in its extent, embracing all mankind who would comply with the conditions of repentance and baptism. If, then, all mankind can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, where is the danger of their being deceived by false revelations? No where, if they are faithful enough to retain the Spirit. "*He shall teach you all things*." "*He shall guide you into all truth*." Oh! how easy it is with this Spirit to detect false revelations, and to be guided into the truth of all new ones! The Spirit knows its own revelations and can testify of them. Hence, says John, in one of his epistles directed to the saints generally, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and *ye need not that any man teach you*; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (1 John, ii. chap.) This "anointing" evidently means the promised Spirit which all the churches of the saints enjoyed. All the saints were taught by this Spirit in all things. By this Spirit they could detect false apostles, false prophets, false teachers, false spirits, false doctrines, and false revelations without the least difficulty.

Paul said, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*; for the Spirit searcheth all things, *yea, the deep things of God*." Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God: *that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God*." "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: *neither can he know them*, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." (1 Cor. ii. chap.) Thus we perceive that the "*natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit*"; therefore he is liable to be deceived, and to embrace false revelations, and believe a lie and be damned, because without the Spirit he is unable to judge whether a revelation is from God or from some other source. Not so with the spiritual man; *he judgeth all things*, and decides by the spirit between error and truth. Neither the eye, the ear, nor the heart of a natural man has perceived the things in reserve for the righteous; but the spiritual man has a knowledge of them by revelation. "*God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*." The Saints find out "*the deep things of God*" by the Spirit. The faithful Saints or the elect cannot be deceived; for the Holy Ghost dwells in them as a spirit of constant revelation, teaching them all things; guiding them into all truth; shewing them things to come; taking of the things of the Father and shewing the same unto them by heavenly visions and dreams, and revealing the deep things of God such as no natural man could ever see, hear, think of, or know, for they are only

spiritually discerned. Thus there is no possibility of a person's ever being deceived who follows the teachings and revelations of the Holy Ghost.

The revelations given by the Holy Ghost; by the voice of the Lord; by the ministry of angels; by visions and dreams, and by the inspired officers of the kingdom, are the kind of laws ordained for the government of the Saints. By such laws they have been governed in every age and dispensation. All churches who have not faith to obtain revelations and laws by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, are not the churches of God. Though they may pretend to great piety; profess to be Christians; make long prayers; preach eloquent sermons; and meet together every Sabbath day under the pretence of worshipping God, yet if they have not faith to obtain new revelations, and visions, and the ministry of angels, they are not the church of God, and are deceiving themselves and others with a false and delusive religion; a religion by which they will perish, as the scripture saith, "*Where there is no vision the people perish.*" (Proverbs, xxix. 18.)

In all human governments there is a necessity for new laws to be given, and sometimes in great abundance. No one will be so wild as to say that the laws given one thousand years ago to England, to France, and to the various nations of the earth, have been strictly applicable to the infinite variety of circumstances in which they have since been placed. Every one knows that all governments would soon fall into the most inextricable confusion should new laws cease to be given only for the short period of fifty years. Every town, city, and district, of any extent, pay out their thousands annually for the support of a law-making department. If new circumstances in all human governments are constantly calling for new laws, why not new circumstances in God's government also require new laws? It may, perhaps, be argued that human laws are imperfect, and therefore new ones are given; but that God's laws being perfect, no new ones are necessary. In reply to this, we observe that in human governments new laws are not generally given because of the imperfections of the old ones, but because new conditions require it. New laws are not often given *instead* of the old ones, but in *addition* to them; both old and new remaining in full force. The want of new laws would be equally as necessary though human laws were ever so perfect. So in the kingdom of God, the perfection of the old laws does not in the least obviate the necessity of new ones as new circumstances arise.

In all human governments every law is made by the legal law-making department, or else it is of no force, and the people are not bound by it. So in the kingdom of God, all laws must come from the Great Law-giver, or else they are of no force, and the people are under no obligations to obey them. If any body of unauthorized men on this island, were to write out a code of laws for the government of the kingdom of Great Britain, who would be so lost to all reason and common sense as to suppose such laws were legal and valid? Yet there are millions who consider themselves under obligations to believe and obey the uninspired writings in the "*Thirty-nine Articles*" of the Church of England, and in the various creeds, catechisms, confessions of faith, and disciplines of other sects, as though they had actually come afresh from God. The vast variety of creeds and articles of faith now in the world, shews clearly that mankind consider that they have need of more rules and laws besides those given in ancient days. The necessity of more has appeared so obvious, that they have concluded to have more at all hazards. To obtain more, from the Great King, they suppose is entirely out of the question. The only way, in their estimation, is to usurp the place of God, and give laws to the people as he anciently did. To obtain laws from the legal Law-giver in these days, they assert is the highest blasphemy, but to usurp authority and give laws and articles of faith in God's stead, they consider is all right. The archbishops, bishops, and whole clergy of the Church of England, with the king at their head, thinking that the Lord had given all the rules, laws, and articles of faith in the Bible which he ever intended to give, and seeing the great necessity there was for more, concluded that wherein the Lord failed in supplying the present wants of their church they would make it up out of the superabundance of their own wisdom. The first rich display of their fruitful imaginations was to invent an entire new kind of god, which no former generation ever thought of. A description of this god they have given in their first article of Religion: he is there represented to be "*without body, parts, or passions.*" Such is the first effort of this great body of

learned divines in helping the Lord make articles of faith. When the Lord made articles of religion in old times, he had not the assistance of such learned men; perhaps that may be the reason that this *bodiless, passionless* god of modern times was not then discovered! Oh! what darkness the world would have been in relative to this god without "*parts*," if these modern divines had suffered the God of Israel to give articles of religion as he did in ancient days! Had it not been for this learned body, the world never would have known that the whole of any thing could exist without "*parts*!"—they never would have known the difference between this newly invented god and the God of Israel, who said to Moses, "*thou shalt see my back parts.*" Exodus xxxii. 23. Let the Church of England hush all their fears, for their god can neither see, hear, nor speak; they never need be afraid that he will give them new revelations, or laws, or articles of religion, or interfere in any way with their church matters. The God of Israel makes his own laws and articles of religion for his own church in all ages; but this modern god, having no tongue, nor mouth, nor any other "*parts*," has left this work entirely to his Right Reverend Worshippers.

Fifth.—*The character, disposition, and qualifications necessary for every citizen to possess.*

After being adopted into the kingdom of God it is necessary that every citizen should cultivate such a character and disposition as shall be most pleasing to their King. Whenever the King shall give them advice or counsel upon any subject, they should, without any hesitation, adhere strictly to that advice or counsel. It is a great thing to find out the will of God, but it is still greater to do it. God requires the most perfect obedience on the part of his subjects. We may not always discern the end or result of doing as we are commanded; but this is no excuse for disobedience. Abraham did not know the useful result the Lord had in view in commanding him to offer up his son Isaac; if he had followed the dictates of his own natural feelings or affections, he never would have attempted to comply with this command; it was enough for him to understand that God required such a sacrifice, without waiting to be informed of the reason why he required it. This should be the disposition and character of every child of God, to go with all his heart and do whatever the Lord requires, though he may be utterly in the dark as to the purpose which God may wish to accomplish by giving such commandment. Does a skilful general reveal to all his soldiers all his purposes and designs in regard to the enemy? No, he only reveals unto them what he wishes them to do, while the result of their obedience is oftentimes entirely hidden from their view. If soldiers were never to obey until they understood the useful results to be accomplished, they would not be very loyal to their officers. How many there are among mankind that would be delighted to obtain a revelation of God's will concerning themselves, if they could be persuaded that he would not reveal any thing contrary to their wishes. They would be very sorry to get a revelation "*to sell all that they had and give to the poor,*" as Jesus told the young man in ancient days. They would not like to hear "*a voice from heaven*" commanding them to come out of Babylon, or to leave their native land, their fine farms and splendid mansions, and go into a strange country as Abraham did: they would prefer to receive no revelations at all, rather than be directed to make such sacrifices. But not so with good faithful citizens of the kingdom of God: they wish to be guided by new revelation day by day, and year by year: they delight to do every thing that the Lord reveals to them, believing that it will be for their future happiness and well-being.

It is not every one that crieth Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but it is he that doeth the will of the Father. Justification, sanctification, purification, and glorification, are all obtained through the atonement of Jesus Christ by doing the will of the Father, as made manifest by the revelation of his word. Jesus prays to the Father thus,—"*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.*" Reader, do you desire to be justified from all your sins? if so, obey the law of justification as revealed from heaven, and your sins shall all be blotted out. Do you desire to be sanctified and purified from all unrighteous and unholy desires? if so, seek to obtain the word of the Lord by new revelation, and after you have obtained it, either directly to yourself, or through others, be sure and obey it, and you shall be made pure and clean; but remember that after the word of the Lord has come unto

you and his will is revealed, and you refuse to obey, your situation will be much worse than those to whom the Lord has never spoken. "He that knoweth his master's will," through the medium of new revelation, "and doeth it not, the same shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knoweth it not," that is, has never been favoured with a message or revelation from his master, and doeth things worthy of stripes, shall only be beaten with few stripes."

When the children of the kingdom pray, let them be careful not to use vain repetitions as the Church of England do in their "*Litany*," for they repeat the same thing over again on every Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday: the same things are asked for some fifty or sixty times on each of these days; so that in fifty years each member of that church repeats the same petition something like four hundred thousand times. The faithful Saints will avoid all such wicked mockery, for it is very displeasing to the true God to have such "*vain repetitions*" constantly sounding in his ears year after year. Where is there a sensible man in all the world that would not be disgusted with his own children, or with any other persons, who should constantly annoy him by asking for the same thing fifty times a day, for three days every week, and follow it up year after year? Such persons would be counted as insane, or unfit for the society of rational beings. How much more, then, will the true God be disgusted, and abhor such nonsense? Any being, except a *bodiless, passionless nonentity*, would treat such worshippers with contempt, and consider them a nuisance in all civilized society.

When the Saints pray, they should endeavour to find out what they want most, and then calmly, simply, and honestly ask for it, with an expectation of receiving it; for, says our Saviour, "If my words abide in you, and ye abide in me, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be given unto you." Do not think that you will be heard for much speaking, or for vain repetitions. If you fail in receiving any thing that would be for your benefit, or any thing that is promised, you may know that there is some cause for it: perhaps you may not have been as faithful as you ought; the fault, if any, must be in yourself; for God's promises are sure. Therefore seek to find out the reason why your prayer is not answered, and remove the cause, and then ask again, and if all is right on your part, you will receive an answer. Seek not to express your desires before the Lord in great swelling words, to be praised of men for your eloquence, neither convert your voice into some unnatural tone; but endeavour to speak to the Lord with the same degree of sincerity and confidence that a child has in asking its parents for food. When you desire any particular blessing, do not let your mind be wandering upon hundreds of other blessings which are foreign from the one which you more earnestly desire, lest your faith become divided, and you fail of receiving any answer. If a great multitude of things are asked for in the same prayer, the Saints are sometimes apt afterwards to forget some things which they have prayed for, and consequently do not look with earnest expectation for the answer, and because of this the blessing is withheld.

The great secret in obtaining favors from God, is to form, modify, and cultivate such characters and dispositions as will correspond in every respect with the teachings of the word and spirit of Christ. Condescend to men of low estate. Despise not the poor because of his poverty; and when you prepare a feast, invite in "*the poor, the halt, the maimed, and blind*"; for they cannot recompense you again in this life, but you shall receive your recompense at the resurrection of the just." Feed the hungry—clothe the naked—administer to the widow and the fatherless in their afflictions—visit the sick. Let your love abound unto all men: endeavour to reclaim men from the error of their ways by telling them the plain unvarnished truth in meekness and with sobriety, remembering that you yourselves were once in gross darkness, because of the traditions and false religions with which you were surrounded; therefore have compassion upon the millions of deluded beings who have deceived themselves with the pomp and vain show of modern christianity. Be upright and honest before all men. Practice virtue and holiness continually. Such should be the disposition and character of all the children of God, in order to qualify themselves for usefulness in this world, and to inherit eternal life in the world to come.

15, Willon Street, Liverpool, Jan. 14th, 1849.

R. JAMES, PRINTER, 39, SOUTH CASTLE STREET.

MAR 1 2 1945

No 5.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

PART IV.

BY ORSON PRATT.

ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

In the preceding PARTS of this treatise, we have already illustrated FIVE important subjects relative to the kingdom of God. The next to be considered in the order of our arrangement is the

Sixth,—Namely, *The rights, privileges, and blessings enjoyed by the subjects in this life.*

The faithful subjects of the kingdom of God are entitled by promise to certain rights and privileges which are not granted to the citizens of any other kingdom. All the children of the kingdom have the right of offering up daily petitions to the King. This inestimable right or privilege is one with which the citizens of other governments are not favoured. It is not only granted as a privilege, but it is also enjoined as a duty upon all the inhabitants of the kingdom, to plainly make known all their wants, and represent all their grievances or wrongs which they may have endured from the citizens of other governments. Those petitions offered in righteousness, are always favourably received; and the blessings asked for in faith, if calculated to benefit the petitioner, are never withheld.

The blessings promised to the children of the kingdom in this life, are wisdom, knowledge, joy, healings, miracles, tongues, interpretations, revelations, visions, dreams, the ministry of angels, prophesying, power to cast out devils, power against deadly poisons, and in fine, all the other gifts of the Holy Ghost as recorded in the scriptures of truth.

Many thousands of sincere honest inquirers have been exceedingly anxious to know whether they were really in the kingdom of God or not. This is an inquiry of infinite importance, and one upon which none should rest satisfied short of a certain knowledge. For the benefit of such inquirers, we here give them an infallible sign by which they may always know the kingdom of God from all other kingdoms. Wherever the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost are enjoyed, there the kingdom of God exists: wherever these gifts are not enjoyed, there the kingdom does not exist.

That believers might be distinguished from unbelievers throughout all the world, Jesus promised certain signs to the former. He said unto them, "These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. Mark xvi. 17, 18, 19.) This promise has been supposed by many to have been limited to the apostles or to the official members of the Church of Christ; but it will be perceived from the context, that Jesus made this promise to every creature throughout all the world who would believe the gospel. In the 15th verse, He commanded the apostles to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." In the 16th verse, He promised salvation to every baptized believer, and damnation to every unbeliever. In the three following verses, He promises miraculous signs to the believer. The promise of miraculous signs was as unlimited in its nature as the promise of salvation. Where the one ceases, the other ceases also. Miraculous signs are a part of the gospel plan, as much as the remission of sins or the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The gospel plan embraces certain commands or ordinances to be believed and obeyed, and certain blessings to be received. To limit the blessings of the gospel

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to the first age of Christianity, is to limit the gospel to that age; for all the blessings, including the signs, were to be received wherever the gospel was received.

Nothing can be more erroneous than to suppose that these signs were merely given to establish the truth of Christianity, and that when that was once established, they were no longer needed. The signs are as much included in the system of Christianity, as any other blessing that can be named. If the signs have ceased, true Christianity, of which the signs are a component part, has ceased. If signs have established the system of Christianity, why should they, as a part of the very system itself cease as unnecessary, while the other part of the system remains? Why not the *whole* system cease, as well as a *part*? Why tell the world that Christianity was established by miraculous signs, and then declare, that as soon as it was established, nearly all of its blessings ceased? If it be established, the whole system, signs and all, should continue in full force, as long as there is a soul on the earth to be saved.

If so great a portion of the gospel blessings were intended to cease as unnecessary, is it not exceedingly strange that no intimation should be given in the scriptures to that effect? When the commands, ordinances, and blessings of the system of Christianity have been once established in the earth, have we not every reason to believe, without the least shadow of a doubt, that they are intended to continue, unless something to the contrary is intimated in the word of God? After Jesus had promised miraculous signs to the believers in all the world, would he withhold the promised blessings from them in any part of the world, or in any age, without giving some reason for not fulfilling his promise? Every believer in all the world, and in every age, should seek after the miraculous signs with as much confidence and assurance as he would seek after any other promised blessing, until Jesus intimates in his word that he no longer intends bestowing them according to promise. Until our Lord declares that he will no longer bestow the promised signs upon believers, every church who are not in possession of these signs, may know that they are not true believers. If true believers fail in receiving the promised signs, they have no reason to suppose that they will receive the promised salvation. Modern Christians who do not enjoy the signs of believers, cannot expect to enjoy the salvation of believers.

One of two things is certainly true, either modern Christians who do not enjoy the miraculous signs, are not true believers, or else Jesus fails on his part to fulfil his promise. If they are not true believers, they will fail of salvation; if Jesus fails on his part to fulfil one promise, what confidence have they to suppose that he will fulfil the others? If true believers learn that Jesus withholds one promise without rendering any reason for so doing, what certainty have they that he will not also withhold every other promise? They can have no certainty at all. Nothing sure upon which to build their hopes of salvation. If one promise fails, all may fail. If the words of Jesus are not fulfilled in one thing, this is calculated to destroy all confidence in the rest of his sayings. Therefore, if they really are true believers, Jesus has refused to fulfil his promise, and give them the signs of true believers, and consequently they may expect that he will refuse to give them a glorious resurrection and an inheritance in his presence.

It may be argued that Jesus has nowhere in his word limited the promise of a glorious resurrection, and of salvation to the believers who should live in the first age of Christianity, and therefore, these promises may be claimed in all successive ages. So, likewise, it may be argued that, as Jesus has nowhere in his word limited the miraculous signs to the believers of the first age of Christianity, therefore they may be claimed by believers in all subsequent ages, as long as the earth should stand.

Jesus promised both the salvation and the signs: both were promised to every creature in all the world who should believe the gospel: both, so far as we can discover from the word of God, were intended for believers of all future generations. Modern believers assert that they have not obtained the promised signs. Why, then, do they assert that they shall obtain the promised salvation? Why suppose that Jesus will fulfil one promise, when he fails to fulfil the other? To illustrate this subject, we offer the following parable:—

A certain king, great and powerful, reigned over a numerous and happy people. His territories were situated in the most beautiful and delightful portions of the earth. The land abounded with the most valuable treasures, such as were unknown in any

other country. Nothing could exceed the order, peace, prosperity, and happiness diffused throughout all his dominions.

At a certain time the king sent forth ambassadors among all nations, to invite them to become subjects of his government, and in due time to emigrate to his happy country. These ambassadors were invested with power to legally administer the oath of allegiance, and all other laws and ordinances which the king had established for the purpose of adopting citizens into his own government. And the king said unto them, He that receiveth you and becomes an adopted citizen, shall, when he emigrates, receive an inheritance in my dominions: but he that is not adopted shall in nowise enter into my kingdom. These signs or tokens shall accompany the adopted citizens: in my name they shall carry a costly medal, enstamped with the great seal of my authority; they shall wear upon one of their fingers a choice jewel from my own dominions; they shall have a white stone upon which shall be engraved, in unknown characters, a new name known only to themselves. All these signs or tokens shall accompany them.

The ambassadors went forth as they were directed, and many thousands in all parts of the world received the ordinances of adoption; and the signs or tokens of their legal citizenship were abundantly manifested. When the adopted citizens received the promised signs, they were greatly confirmed, and believed with much assurance that they should, after emigration, receive the promised inheritance.

In process of time a great persecution arose. Many of these adopted citizens were put to death. Many others began, through carelessness, to lose the precious signs and tokens of their citizenship. At length persecution began to abate, and the proclamation of the king was received more favourably. Many, on account of its increasing popularity, assumed the authority to administer the oath of allegiance and the ordinances of adoption, without either seeing or hearing from the king. For fear the people would question their authority, they flattered them with the idea that the king would no longer call ambassadors by revealing any new commissions, and that the whole work of commissioning and authorizing was left entirely to their own wisdom. But it was soon found that the signs and tokens of citizenship were no longer granted, although many petitioned the king very earnestly to send them, but their petitions were unheeded. The reason of this was, because no one was authorized from the king to administer the oath of allegiance and adopt citizens legally. Therefore the king would not give the tokens of citizenship. But these unauthorized usurpers, who had already made the people believe that it was unnecessary to receive a commission by any new revelation, next actually persuaded the people to believe that the signs and tokens of citizenship were also unnecessary. Popularity and age soon established these false traditions, insomuch that the people almost universally believed, in direct opposition to the promise of the king, that the signs of citizenship were unnecessary.

They continued to emigrate in great numbers as was supposed to the promised land, where it was expected they would receive the promised inheritance. But as it was absurd, according to their traditions, to expect any communication from that land, they could not tell whether the emigrants were permitted to enter into the kingdom and receive their inheritance, or not. Now the king was very angry with those who had usurped authority, and had administered the laws of adoption without being sent. He was also very angry with the people who had suffered themselves to be so grossly imposed upon, as to suppose that any could be sent without some communication from him. He, therefore, withheld from them the promised signs and also the promised inheritance, for none of them had been legally adopted. Though they obtained none of the tokens or signs, yet they vainly flattered themselves that they should get the inheritance. But as many as were found who had been deceived, and had not the promised signs of citizenship, were taken and bound as enemies and aliens, and cast into their own place; and great misery prevailed among them—weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

And after a long time had passed away, the king sent forth from his dominions one mighty and strong, clothed with great power; and many other messengers were called and sent even according to the first pattern. And they were commanded to go unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and to call upon all men to come forth and be legally adopted, and take the oath of allegiance from such as were

authorized to administer it, and from their hands to receive the ordinances of adoption. And the king again renewed his promise, and said that the signs and tokens of citizenship should again be enjoyed, and such should receive the promised inheritance.

Now these messengers went forth according to the commandments of the king, and those who received them were blessed with the signs, and had much assurance. Now these unauthorized usurpers who pretended to be the servants of the king, and those whom they had deceived, when they saw the signs and tokens of citizenship again made manifest, were exceedingly angry, and sent forth all manner of wicked accusations and lies against the king's messengers, and those who had received them; and by these wicked means the people were stirred up to greatly persecute them, destroying many, and driving others from place to place, and from city to city. At length they were driven forth a great distance from among the nations; and there they were nourished until they became exceedingly strong: the king himself greatly strengthened them by additional tokens of his goodness.

The king's messengers, notwithstanding the cruelties which they received from the people, continued to go from nation to nation, and the signs and tokens of citizenship began to shine forth with greater brilliancy, which enraged the pretended citizens who had not these tokens still more; and they gathered together in multitudes upon all the face of the earth to fight against those who had the signs of citizenship. In process of time, after passing through many tribulations, the lawful heirs went out from among the nations with power and great glory, and gathered themselves in one. And it came to pass that they built a great city unto the king, and he came with all the mighty ones of his dominions, and dwelt among them; and those who had fought against his messengers perished; and all the earth came under the dominion of the great king.

Let us now examine the use or benefit of these miraculous signs. Jesus said, "*These signs shall follow them that believe.*" If they were to be of no particular use or benefit to the believer, it is not reasonable to suppose that Jesus would have promised them. Modern christendom asserts that these signs were given, not so much for the benefit of believers, as for the convincing of unbelievers. The servants of God, it is said, wrought signs and wonders to establish the divine authenticity of their calling and message. Signs followed, they assert, that all people might know believers from unbelievers—the true church from every other church.

If these signs, as modern divines suppose, were given for these purposes, then we ask, Why should they be done away in succeeding ages, when there were millions of unbelievers upon the earth? How are people to determine at the present day which among all the modern churches is the Church of Christ? How shall they know believers from unbelievers? or the ministers of Christ from deceivers or impostors? We can distinguish them now, says modern christendom, by the word of God. But the word of God says, "*signs shall follow them that believe.*" And as they deny signs in these days, the word of God would at once condemn them all as unbelievers. Not any of the Papists or Protestant sects can prove, by the word of God, to the unbelieving world, that they are the true church—that their ministry is authorized of God, and that they are true believers in Christ. The word of God condemns them all, because they have not the signs which Jesus said should follow the believers.

The Protestants denounce the Catholics as the Mother of Harlots—the most wicked and corrupt power on the earth. The Catholics denounce the Protestants as heretics and apostates from the true church. The word of God denounces them both as unbelievers, because they lack the signs. The infidel world denounces the word of God, because miraculous signs follow neither Catholics nor Protestants, who pretend to be believers. The sincere inquirer is almost distracted, because he is in great doubt whether to believe in Catholics, Protestants, Infidelity, or the Word of God. If signs then were given to distinguish the ministers of Christ from impostors, surely the present generation need them if ever they were needed.

In the midst of all these conflicting opinions, the humble servant of God comes forth and boldly declares that no church can be the true church, unless they obey the words of Christ, and enjoy the signs of believers. He testifies with authority that all the promises of Jesus will be fulfilled while there is one believer upon the face of the earth to be perfected and saved. He testifies that all who deny that signs

will follow them that believe, are unbelievers, who, according to the words of Christ must be damned.

It is very evident however, that these signs were not given merely for the purpose of convincing unbelievers. "*In my name,*" says Jesus, "*they shall cast out devils.*" Although this power might, in certain cases convince the unbelieving world, yet it is by no means to be supposed that this was the principal design. Devils and unclean spirits frequently took possession of the human tabernacle, tormenting individuals in various ways. Jesus promised believers that they, in his name, should cast them out. Now one object which Jesus had in view in granting this power, was to benefit the one possessed. Another object was to confirm the believer, that they by having power over the devil in this life, might be more fully assured that they should obtain a complete victory and final triumph over him in the world to come. That person who cannot obtain power in the name of Jesus to cast out devils in this life, has great reason to fear lest the devil shall obtain power over him in the next life. What assurance has any one that he shall obtain a complete salvation from the power of the devil, when his spirit shall leave the body, if he cannot claim the promise of Jesus, and cast him out while his spirit dwells in the body? One of the purposes then which Jesus had in view in bestowing this blessing, was that believers might learn to prevail against the devil before they should enter the invisible world of spirits. And another purpose, as we have already named, was to deliver the unhappy demoniac from his miserable and wretched condition, and set him free from the grasp of this awful monster.

Now both of these purposes are just as essential for the good of mankind in this age as in the first age of Christianity. It would be equally as essential for a man who is possessed of devils in this age to be liberated, as it was in any former age. And it would also be equally as essential that a believer should learn to command the devil in the name of Jesus, that he might obtain a complete victory over him in all things, as it was for ancient believers. Therefore, as there is no Scripture to do away this promise, nor any reason to prove it unnecessary, it must be intended for believers of all ages until the devil is bound.

"*They shall speak in new tongues.*" The benefit of this miraculous sign is obvious to every one. If a servant of God were under the necessity of acquiring in the ordinary way a knowledge of languages, a large portion of his time would be unprofitably occupied. While he was spending years to learn the language of a people sufficiently accurate to preach the glad tidings of salvation unto them, thousands would be perishing for the want of the knowledge. If he could be endowed immediately by the power of the Holy Ghost to speak in any language necessary, how much laborious study would be avoided; how much time would be saved that could be occupied more usefully in the spread of the gospel; how much more accurately would principles be expressed, when, not only the ideas, but the language itself is given by the Holy Ghost. How vastly superior is God's plan of qualifying his servants to preach in different languages and tongues, to the plans adopted by modern divines! The servant of God is qualified in a moment, as it were, to preach by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the language of any people to whom he may be sent; while modern divines will throw away years in acquiring the knowledge of a language; and when they have acquired it, they cannot preach in it by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but are still dependent upon their own learning and wisdom.

In one day the unlearned fishermen of Galilee acquired a more extensive qualification for preaching in the different languages of the earth, than all the various grades and ranks of clergymen who have disgraced the name of Christianity on the eastern hemisphere for the last seventeen centuries. The gift of tongues was not confined to the ministers of Christ alone, but it was bestowed liberally upon the private members of the church. Indeed, it was one of the signs promised to believers throughout all the world. As soon as Paul baptized the Ephesians, he laid his hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost, and immediately spake with tongues and prophesied. (See Acts xix. 6.) When the household of Cornelius received the Holy Spirit, they also spake with tongues and glorified God. (See Acts x. 46.) The Corinthian church were abundantly blessed with this gift. (See 1 Cor. xii., xiii., and xiv. chapters.)

That the principal use of this gift was to preach the gospel to people of different tongues and languages we presume no one will deny. And that there was another

benefit derived through the medium of this gift is also evident. The members of the church were confirmed and strengthened in their faith by the enjoyment of this gift. Jesus had promised this miraculous sign, among many others, to believers; if they had failed to receive the blessings, they would have had reason to doubt whether they were true believers; but when they received new tongues, together with all other promised blessings, they were no longer in doubt, but were assured, not only of the truth of the doctrine, but that they themselves were accepted of God.

The benefits to be derived from this gift are as essential in this age, as in the first age of Christianity. It is as necessary that people of different languages should hear the gospel now, as in early ages. It is also as important that believers should be confirmed by this gift now, as it ever was. Therefore, as there is no scripture to limit this gift to the early Christians, and no reason why believers should not enjoy it now, we are compelled to admit that this promise of Jesus is in full force yet, and that whenever and wherever we find a church of true believers in Christ, there we shall also find the signs of believers. And as the gift of tongues is not among the apostate churches now on the earth, we are compelled by the word of God to consider them all unbelievers. Indeed, they cannot be believers; for if they were they could speak with new tongues, as Jesus promised.

"They shall take up serpents, or if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." This promise of our Great Redeemer was also made to every creature in all the world who should believe the gospel. The use of this miraculous gift was to preserve life, in case any believer should accidentally be bitten by a poisonous serpent as Paul was; (see Acts xxviii. ;) or should unintentionally swallow a deadly poison, as the sons of the prophets did; (see 2 Kings iv.). Jesus promised that it should not hurt them. When the Israelites were bitten by poisonous serpents, they were healed by simply looking at a brazen serpent which the Lord commanded Moses to raise up in the wilderness; so the believers in Christ can prevail against deadly poisons by simply looking to him in faith; for Jesus cannot fail to fulfil his promise to the believer.

"They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." This also is one of the signs of believers. Sickness is a very prevalent calamity among the inhabitants of our fallen world. Any medical discoveries that will benefit the sick, are considered of inestimable value. Medicines are valued in proportion to their usefulness. Some medicines are useful in one disease, but of no benefit in any other; some will conquer a disease, but, at the same time, will leave a lasting injury upon the human constitution. Others have a more salutary effect; and are beneficial in numerous diseases; such, when their beneficial tendencies are thoroughly understood, are generally prized in preference to those of an inferior quality.

One of the most simple and harmless prescriptions for the sick, and one which is a certain cure for diseases and plagues of every description—is that prescribed by one of the most celebrated physicians that ever lived among men. The prescription is simply this—"THEY SHALL LAY HANDS UPON THE SICK, AND THEY SHALL RECOVER." There is no disease so violent in its nature—so deadly in its operations, but what this remedy, when properly attended to, will effect a complete cure, without in the least injuring the human system like many other prescriptions. This remedy is infinitely superior to all others, first because of its universal application to all diseases, plagues, and pestilences; secondly, because of the certainty with which it removes pain and every cause of disease; thirdly, because of the expeditious and immediate relief which it affords the patient; fourthly, because it does not prostrate the human system, and injure the constitution like many other powerful prescriptions, which frequently terminate in the worst of consequences; fifthly, because it can be obtained without money, or price, being within the reach of the poor as well as the rich; sixthly, because it does not require years of laborious study to acquire a knowledge of the nature of the disease or of the nature of its treatment like most other theories; and seventhly, because it can be obtained in all parts of the world where true believers are to be found.

Another prescription of equal value, and producing like effects is given by another celebrated author in these words:—"Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise them

up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." James v. 14, 15. The prayer of faith accompanied by the ordinances is the most universal, powerful, and effective remedy of any that has ever yet been discovered.

The great Physician, who has unfolded to the nations this infinitely valuable and all powerful remedy, has been jealous of his own glory, and has so prepared it that it can never be administered with the least effect only in his name by one that is authorized, that is by a true believer. This is an effectual preventative against all quacks and impostors who may undertake in his name to counterfeit the genuine; for in all cases, such will fail like the seven sons of Sceva. Acts xix. 13, 14, 15, 16.

The apostate churches for many centuries past have been destitute of this promised blessing of our Saviour. They have endeavoured to blind the eyes of mankind, by telling them that this blessing was not needed after the first age of Christianity. This false tradition, invented by a set of wicked impostors to hide their own unbelief and want of authority, has been handed down by successive false teachers, until the present day; and what is still more strange, there are millions of poor ignorant fanatics, who have been led away with the fatal delusion. It has been the study of the wicked impostors of modern times to persuade the people that the promised signs of the gospel are not needed now. In this thing there is great policy; for as they have so far apostatized as to be entirely destitute of the blessing themselves, if they could not succeed in deluding their followers to suppose that miraculous signs are not needed in these days, all people would at once discover, that they were not believers, but impostors, acting without authority, having a form of godliness, but destitute of its promised powers, pretending to be believers without the signs of believers.

If their deluded followers should, by any means, get the scales of priestcraft off from their eyes sufficiently to believe the promise of Jesus in preference to the traditional impositions of their false, rotten-hearted, and corrupt ministers, away would go the popularity of long-established institutions, and down would tumble, with a tremendous crash, the long-loved salaries of a hireling priesthood, and they would stand forth as monuments of shame and disgrace before all men. To save themselves from this open disgrace, they have used all their cunning and ingenuity to deceive the people into the belief that the gift of healing, and the other promised signs of Jesus, are unnecessary now.

But are there any sick in these days? if so, would it not be just as beneficial for the sick to be relieved in these days as at any former time? Would it not confirm and establish believers to lay hands on the sick, and see them healed in these days, as much as it did ancient believers? If then, it would confirm believers and benefit the sick the same now as anciently, we have no reason to limit it to the early christians. Hence, both scripture and reason show that the promised signs are as unlimited as the promised salvation.

The affliction of devils,—the confusion of tongues,—deadly poisons,—and sickness, are all curses which have been introduced into the world by the wickedness of man. The blessings of the Gospel are bestowed to counteract these curses. Therefore, as long as these curses exist, the promised signs are needed to counteract their evil consequences. If Jesus had not intended, that the blessings should be as extensive and unlimited in point of time as the curses, he would have intimated something to that effect in his word. But when he makes a universal promise of certain powers, to enable every believer in the Gospel throughout the world to overcome certain curses, entailed upon man, because of wickedness, it would be the rankest kind of infidelity not to believe the promised blessings necessary, as long as the curses abound among men.

If these signs are necessary, why have they not existed among the churches for the last seventeen centuries? Because no true believers have existed among them during that time; for Jesus says, they shall follow the true believer; hence, if there had been any true believers, the signs would have been among them. But the very fact that the signs have ceased during that time, prove that true believers have ceased also. This is a sad picture of mankind, but it is none the less true. We say, let the promise of our blessed Redeemer be true, though it prove every man a liar or a hypocrite. The fault cannot be in Jesus, therefore it must be in man. The promises of Christ are as unchangeable as his own nature, and can never fail; but man is as changeable as the wind, and is very apt to fall in almost every respect.

Since the great apostacy, sincerity has characterized millions of professed christians, but none of them have obeyed the ancient Gospel, because no one was authorized to legally administer its ordinances to them; therefore, notwithstanding their sincerity, they could not obey the Gospel for the want of a legal administrator; hence, they could have no legal claim on the Gospel blessings. And, for this reason, they could not become legal or adopted believers; therefore, they could have no legal claim on the signs promised to believers; and this is one reason why the sincere, honest-hearted, professed Christians of modern times have not enjoyed these great blessings promised by our Saviour. Neither can they enjoy the promised salvation in all its fullness, but must be rewarded according to their works, and the opportunities they have enjoyed, in some of the mansions or kingdoms inferior in glory to the kingdom possessed by the ancient saints, who obeyed the law and enjoyed the promised blessings. And all who will not now repent, as the authority is once more restored to the earth, and come forth out of the corrupt apostate churches, and be legally adopted into the church of Christ, and earnestly seek after the blessings and miraculous gifts of the Gospel, shall be thrust down to hell, saith the Lord God of Hosts; for now they have no excuse for their belief; therefore, if they will not now repent, they shall be damned. This is the word of the Lord to priests and people of all churches, and of all nations.

We will now give a few examples to show the principle upon which the sick were generally healed. This was accomplished through faith in Jesus Christ. If the sick were capable of exercising faith, then faith was required of them in order to obtain the blessing. The woman who had the issue of blood for twelve years said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." Jesus turned to her and said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made the whole." (Mark v.) When Jesus went over into the land of Genesareth, and passed through their villages, cities, and countries, so great was their faith in him, that they brought their sick and laid them "in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole." (Mark vi.) Blind Bartimeus cried unto the Lord for mercy. "And Jesus said unto him, go thy way; thy faith hath made the whole." (Mark x.) When Jesus touched the eyes of two blind men that came into the house where he was, he said unto them, "according to your faith be it unto you." (Matthew ix. 29.) A certain cripple "heard Paul speak; who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked." (Acts xiv. 9, 10.)

Many other examples might be given to show that the power of healing was manifested through faith. Sometimes the faith of others was exercised in behalf of the sick, as examples: A woman of Canaan sought a blessing for her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil. "Jesus answered, and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee, even as thou wilt." (Matthew xv.) A centurion exercised faith in behalf of his servant, who was sick of the palsy. "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour." (Matthew viii.) A certain man whose son had been tormented of the devil from a child, says to Jesus, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." (Mark ix.) The devil was rebuked, and his son was liberated. Jairus, whose daughter lay at the point of death, came to Jesus, and fell down before him, and requested him to go and lay his hands upon her, that she might be healed. While on the way to his house, one met them saying, "Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he said unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe." (Mark v.) And Jesus restored his daughter to life again. Many other instances are recorded where friends exercised faith in behalf of the afflicted.

Therefore, it may be considered as a general law, that the sick and afflicted were healed, either through their own faith, or the faith of some of their friends. There may be some rare instances where the blessing is bestowed through the faith alone of the administrator.

It is the general opinion of modern churches that the principal object of miracles

was to do away unbelief. But when Jesus went into his own country, among his old acquaintances, he marvelled because of their unbelief. (See Mark vi. 5.) "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." (Matthew xiii.) But according to the ideas of the false teachers of modern times, he should have performed greater works there, than anywhere else. As they consider signs to be for the convincing of the unbeliever; therefore the greater the unbelief, the greater should be the signs. When he found his own countrymen so very unbelieving, he should, according to modern notions concerning the object of signs, have performed far more splendid and magnificent miracles there, than he did in any other region where their unbelief was not so great. But the facts of the case were directly the reverse. The greater the wickedness and unbelief of a people, the less were the mighty works performed among them. So among the christian churches, as their unbelief increased, the mighty works decreased. And when the people became hardened in apostacy and unbelief, all mighty works ceased, and the salvation ceased also.

Thus it will be seen, that the signs and blessings of the Gospel are enjoyed only by faith. The greater the faith, the greater will be the manifestations of the miraculous power of God. The miracles will decrease as faith decreases; and cease when faith ceases. The miraculous signs bestowed upon believers in this life, are blessings far inferior to the blessings of a glorious resurrection and eternal life. But he that has not faith sufficient to obtain the miraculous signs, or smaller blessings, how can he obtain faith sufficient to receive the greater blessings? If the smaller blessings are withheld for the want of faith, will not the greater blessings be withheld for a like reason? If a person has not means enough to buy himself a coat, how can he expect to purchase a splendid habitation? So likewise, if a person has not faith enough to obtain the miraculous signs promised, how can he expect to obtain a glorious mansion in the kingdom of God? If his faith is so weak that it will not procure for him the smaller blessings, he may be much more assured that the same weak faith will not procure for him the greater blessings.

Jesus said, as we have already quoted, that "*All things are possible to him that believeth.*" Jesus also said, "Have faith in God. For verily, I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore, I say unto you: What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them." (Mark xi. 22, 23, 24.) This promise was not confined to the apostles and early saints; for the term, "*whosoever,*" embraces all mankind who shall have faith in every age throughout the world. Who can read these precious promises of our Saviour, without perceiving in the plainest light, the awful apostate condition of the churches? They are without faith,—without any confidence in God. They despise those who are sincerely seeking after the ancient faith. Both from the pulpit and from the press they boldly avow their infidelity in the above promises, and say all manner of evil against those who do believe them. They will greatly praise up the faith of the ancient saints, and build synagogues and chapels to their memory; but for any person to teach that the same faith is necessary now, is, in their estimation, the highest blasphemy. O ye hypocrites! Why do you profess to be the followers of Christ, and yet deny his promises? O ye blind guides! Why do you deceive the people with a form of Godliness, and yet deny the promised powers? Why do you make void the promises of Jesus through your unbelief and wicked traditions? Why do you, through great swelling words of man's wisdom, pervert the truth, and deny the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and the gift of revelation and prophecy? Why do you preach for hire, and through covetousness make merchandise of the people, while the poor and the needy are crying for bread? O ye wicked and corrupt teachers! Ye hirelings! Why do you, through your mock piety and cunning craftiness, not only close the gates of heaven upon yourselves, but hedge up the way of others who would know the truth and be saved? How can you escape the vengeance of eternal fire? How long will the Lord suffer you to practice your deceptions and wickedness? The hour of your judgment is nigh! Howl, ye apostate churches, for the miseries which shall come upon you! The day of fierce vengeance is at hand, and ye shall utterly perish from the earth!

The church of Christ is called the body of Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Cor. xii. 27.) We shall here give the names of the different members, composing the various parts of the body or church of Christ. "God hath set some in the church, first, *apostles*; secondarily, *prophets*; thirdly, *teachers*; after that *miracles*; then gifts of *healing*, *helps*, *governments*, diversities of *tongues*." (Verse 28.) These members of the body were joined together upon one common principle which I have already explained in Part II. of this treatise. They were all introduced into the church through faith, repentance, and the ordinances. Paul says, "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." (Verse 13.)

This one body into which all the members are baptized, is quickened and animated in all its parts by one spirit. The operations of the spirit in different parts of the body are various. "To one," says Paul, "is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (Verses 8, 9, 10, 11.) Paul has here, so clearly described the church of Christ, that none need be at a loss when they have found it. Every faithful member of the body of Christ possesses some gift of the Spirit. Every church now on the earth can compare themselves with this scriptural pattern; if they do not resemble the pattern, they may know at once that they are not the body or church of Christ. If they have no apostles nor prophets—no officers that can receive the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge by the inspiration of the Spirit—if they have no member possessing the gift of healing—no worker of miracles—no beholder of visions or discerners of spirits—no speaker in tongues—no interpreter of tongues—if they have none of these members of the body of Christ, then they have nothing that resembles the pattern, and, therefore, they cannot possibly be the church of Christ.

The body of Christ is wholly made up or constituted of the above named members. To do away the least member there mentioned would produce a schism in the body, and it would be imperfect, like the human body, with one of its members lacking. The body, or church, like the human body, would become more and more imperfect and mutilated in proportion to the usefulness and number of the above members that are done away. And when all the members or parts of the body vanish, it ceases to exist on the earth. It is an admitted fact that the greater part, if not all of the members described by Paul are done away, and considered unnecessary at the present day. And as the body or church is *nothing*, separate and apart from its members; therefore, where they cease, the body must cease also.

There are many parts of the human body that are essential to its existence, and without which, the body must inevitably perish; such for examples, as the mouth—the heart—the lungs—the stomach—the liver—the bowels, and many others too numerous to mention. Deprive the body of either of these essential parts, and all other parts will perish also. Two of the most prominent parts or members of the body of Christ are, "First, *apostles*; secondly, *prophets*." These may be considered the eyes and mouth-piece of the body. Take these away, and the body is left in total darkness without eyes to see with, or a mouth through which to receive the nourishment essential to its existence. If, therefore, only these two members were to cease, all the other members would speedily perish, and the church of Christ would cease to exist among men. The apostate churches have had neither of these members for upwards of seventeen centuries, therefore, during that time, they have had no eyes nor mouth through which they could receive light and nourishment.

If the mouth and eyes of the human body were to be destroyed, the human spirit would take its flight, and the body would soon become a mass of putrid corruption, sending forth a most offensive stench, engendering pestilence and disease, and affecting the health of all who should come within its noxious influence. Such would be the fatal consequences attending the church should they so far depart from God as to lose inspired apostles and prophets, the first two essential and most important mem-

bers which God placed in the body. If these members were taken away, the Holy Spirit, which is the life of the church, would take its flight, even as the human spirit flees from the mortal body, when its essential parts are destroyed. When the Holy Spirit takes its departure, the body, or church, is left in a lifeless state; all the miraculous operations of the Spirit cease.

In ancient times, after apostles and prophets ceased, the other members of the body began immediately to die for want of nourishment; the member possessing the gift of healing—the worker of miracles—the speaker with tongues—the interpreter of tongues, and all other members, withered away and died, leaving a mass of putrid corruption whose noxious stench and abominable filthiness have spread forth a deadly malaria among all nations.

It is in vain for the apostate churches to endeavor to prove themselves to be the body of Christ, by pretending that they have one or two of the members still in existence; for Paul enquires, "If they were all one member, where were the body?" (Verse 19.) If every part of our bodies were destroyed, except hands and feet, they could in no wise constitute a living body; so, likewise, if every member of the church were done away, except professed teachers, and some two or three other pretended members of different functions, these could no more constitute a living church, than hands, and arms, and feet, and legs, could constitute a living man. The Holy Spirit would no more dwell in these pretended fragments of the church, which are falsely said to still remain, than the human spirit would dwell in the hands, feet, or legs, after the rest of the body was gone.

Reader, would it not be marvellously strange to behold hands, feet, and legs moving, acting, and performing their accustomed functions after all the rest of the body was destroyed? Yet this would not be any more strange, than it is to see teachers and some few other pretended members, endeavoring to move, and act, and perform certain other functions, after nine-tenths of the most important and vital members of the church have been done away for centuries. As well might you undertake to retain life in an isolated human hand, as to retain life in teachers for centuries after apostles, prophets, workers of miracles, &c., have ceased.

Paul says, "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you." (Verse 21.) But in direct opposition to this instruction, the apostate teachers of modern times say to the worker of miracles, I have no need of thee. And their pastors say to the speaker with tongues, and the interpreter of tongues, we have no need of you in the body. It matters not how feeble, or how much inferior in use some members are, when compared with others, yet none can be dispensed with. "Nay," says Paul, "much more, those members of the body, which seems to be more feeble, are necessary." (Verse 22.) If the speaker with tongues, or the interpreter of tongues, is considered a more feeble member, and not as useful as the prophets or apostles; yet Paul says expressly, that such "*are necessary*." Therefore, for a teacher or pastor to say that they are *not* necessary, is to come out in direct opposition to the scriptures.

How superlatively ridiculous it would be for the hands and feet to rise up in rebellion against the eyes—the mouth—the heart—the lungs—the bowels—the breast—the neck, and say, we have no need of you: we can get along without your assistance; you are all useless appendages to us, hands and feet: we can feel and walk without your help. And yet as a parallel to this, the teachers and pastors of our day have arisen up in rebellion to Paul's words, and have said to apostles—prophets—the healer of the sick—the worker of miracles—the beholder or discerners of spirits—the speaker with tongues—the interpreter of tongues—we have no need of you: we can get along without your assistance, you are all unnecessary parts of the body: you are perfectly useless to us pastors and teachers: we can perform all the functions of our office without your aid. Such has been the state of the apostate churches for the last seven hundred years. And such is the awful darkness that now reigns in their midst.

It is in and through the body or church of Christ that the Spirit manifests itself: "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." (Verse 7.) It is, therefore, by these manifestations that every man in the church is profited. There is as much necessity for these various manifestations now as anciently. Paul mentions in this chapter nine different gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. All

churches which have not these miraculous manifestations have not the Holy Spirit; and without the Spirit they are none of Christ's.

The distinguishing characteristics between true and false churches are so evident that none need be mistaken. The one enjoys the Holy Spirit with all its gifts, as set forth in the word of God; the others profess to enjoy the Spirit, but have none of the gifts and operations ascribed to it. The only way by which we discover that the human body is animated by the human spirit, is by its operations; so likewise, the method by which we determine that a church enjoys the Holy Spirit is by its diversity of operations or manifestations. If these cease, we have every reason to believe that the Holy Spirit has departed also.

Among all nations, and in all ages of the world, whenever the Holy Spirit has been given, it has exhibited itself in supernatural gifts. These gifts were given, not only for the benefit of the church in this life, but to prepare them for still greater blessings in the world to come. It is altogether a mistaken idea to suppose that these gifts were merely given for the convincing of unbelievers. Paul says expressly, that the gifts which were given by our Lord after his ascension were intended for other purposes. "When he (Christ) ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Eph. iv. 8.) "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." (Verse 11.) These, together with numerous other gifts, were given, not merely to establish the truth of Christianity, but as Paul says, "For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love." (Verses 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.)

By these declarations we discover the objects which the Lord has in view, by giving gifts unto men. One object is declared to be "*for the perfecting of the Saints.*" It is very evident from the whole tenor of scripture, that unless the Saints are perfected they can never enjoy a perfect salvation. The only plan which Jesus has devised for the accomplishment of this great object, is through the medium of the spiritual gifts. When the supernatural gifts of the Spirit cease, the Saints cease to be perfected, therefore they can have no hopes of obtaining a perfect salvation. To do away from the church, apostles, prophets, and other gifts, is to do away the great plan which heaven has devised for the perfection and final salvation of the righteous.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews urges upon the Saints the necessity of "*going on unto perfection,*" (see chap. vi. 1), but this would be impossible for those churches who have no apostles, prophets, and other gifts which Jesus gave after his ascension. Such churches could not "go on unto perfection," for they have lost, and continue to do away the very gifts which were intended to accomplish that object.

Has Jesus anywhere in his word told us that his plan of perfecting the Saints should cease, and that mankind would introduce a better one? If not, why then should we not prefer our Saviour's plan in preference to all others? Why do away the powers and gifts of the Holy Ghost, which were intended, not merely for the convincing of unbelievers, but for the perfecting of believers? In every nation and age, where believers exist, there the gifts must exist to perfect them, otherwise they would be altogether unprepared for the reception of the still greater powers and glories of the eternal world. If there were no unbelievers on the earth, still there would be the same necessity for the miraculous gifts that there was among early Christians; for if the whole world were believers in Christ they could not possibly be perfected without these gifts, and hence they could not enter into the fulness of his glory.

It is, therefore, directly in opposition to the word of God for the apostate churches to declare that "the object of miraculous gifts was merely to establish the Christian religion, and that after that object was accomplished they were no longer necessary, and therefore ceased." The word of God declares they were "*for the perfecting of*

the saints;" and, therefore, wherever there are *saints*, there the gifts are needed, not merely to establish the truth by supernatural evidence, but to *perfect* those who already believe.

Another great object which the Lord has in view, in sending gifts unto men, is "*the work of the ministry.*" Without these gifts the "work of the ministry" never could be carried on;—without inspired apostles and prophets the gifts of revelation and prophecy cease, and where these cease the work of the ministry ceases. The apostate churches have no more authority for taking away the gifts of apostles and prophets, than they have for taking away the gifts of pastors and teachers. There is precisely the same evidence for doing away the whole of the gifts, as there is for doing away a part and pretending to retain the others. "The work of the ministry" is clearly manifested in the scriptures. It is required to preach the gospel to all nations in the different tongues and languages of the earth. The ministry is required to receive revelations for the benefit of themselves and all the saints, reproving by revelation those who need reproof; comforting those who need comfort; forewarning the church of approaching judgments; pointing out by the spirit of revelation a way of escape; revealing doctrine and principle in relation to things both temporal and spiritual, and unfolding all things necessary for the perfection and eternal exaltation of the righteous. Besides this, the ministry are to lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and for the healing of the sick, and administer all other ordinances of the church. Therefore, without the supernatural powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit the "work of the ministry" would cease, and when that ceases men cease to be saved.

Paul declares, as we have already quoted, that the gifts were given "*for the edifying of the body of Christ.*" But the various bodies or apostate churches declare boldly, that the gifts are no longer necessary in this age of learning and refinement. Now, say they, we can be edified by learned divines who have become eminently qualified by a long course of study in our great theological institutions. Now, they exclaim, we have a glorious substitute in the stead of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the first age of Christianity—in the days of ignorance and darkness, the gifts of the spirit were given to edify the church; but now, we have become so learned and enlightened, we need some better plan than the one devised in that day of ignorance; then they knew no better than to be edified through the gifts of the Spirit, but now we have sought out a plan far superior; then they had nothing but knowledge and certainty, and were all of one mind, but now we are blessed with the opinions and commentaries of uninspired men, all differing and contradicting one another, dividing us in our sentiments and doctrines. Oh, how great is the wisdom of our modern divines! How immensely superior are opinion and guess-work to certainty and knowledge! Then they had nothing but direct revelation—the spirit of prophecy, visions, and the ministry of angels to guide them into the truth, but now we have advanced to the high and exalted privilege of being taught by men who despise new revelation and the gifts of the Spirit, and favour us with their superior opinions, and creeds, and articles of religion. Great is the plan devised by human wisdom, for the edifying of the church; God's plan can be dispensed with now as unnecessary. This is the language of modern christendom if we are to judge from their opposition to the gifts which Paul says, were given for the "*edifying of the body of Christ.*"

That no one need be mistaken, and suppose the gifts in the future ages of the church to be unnecessary, Paul says expressly, that they shall continue for the purposes which he specifies, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This puts the subject beyond all doubt and controversy; all can see that the gifts were intended as long as there was a church of the saints that needed perfecting and edifying. If the modern churches of Christendom have not attained to the unity of the faith and knowledge—to all the perfection and fulness of Christ, they certainly need the gifts until they shall arrive at that state. The period when the saints shall attain to the perfection and fulness of Christ is very clearly and definitely unfolded by the apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come,

then that which is in part shall be done away." (xiii., 8, 9, 10.) "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known." Verse 12.

Thus it will be seen that the gifts were not to cease until "that which is perfect is come"—until we see the Lord face to face—until we know as we are known. Then tongues will cease, and the heavenly glorified throng will all speak the same language. Then prophesying in part will be done away; for the knowledge of the future will be fully understood. Then knowledge in part shall vanish away, and the saints will know in full. Then the day of perfection will come, and all the saints shall enjoy the fulness of Christ, and see him no longer through a glass darkly, but face to face. Until that day of glory and perfection shall arrive, all the spiritual gifts will be indispensably necessary, without which the saints can never attain to that great salvation promised.

Another object for which the miraculous gifts are given unto men, is to keep them from delusion. They are given that the saints "henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." The very reason why the apostate churches have for the last seventeen centuries been carried about by the doctrines, creeds, and traditions of uninspired men who have craftily deceived them,—is because they lacked the gifts which Paul says were given as an effectual preventative against such winds of doctrine. All churches which have not the gifts, are already deceived and deluded. If it were possible, these popular and learned impostors would deceive the very elect; but this is impossible, for the elect enjoy the gifts which will detect with the most unerring certainty every imposition, however plausible and popular it may be.

The Papist and Protestant churches of modern times, notwithstanding the greatness of their numbers and their exceedingly great popularity,—are impositions, under the pious name of Christianity, of the most glaring and dangerous kind.

Their cunning, learned, arch-impostors, have multiplied their followers to millions, and flooded all Europe and America with their pernicious doctrines. Thousands of the honest and unwary are annually led away by these fatal delusions under the false and vain suppositions that they are embracing Christianity. Instead, however, of embracing the Christian religion of the New Testament, they have only embraced some traditional forms that bear but a faint resemblance to it, while its miraculous powers, gifts, and blessings are entirely unknown among them, and, indeed, are considered as altogether unnecessary. Oh, apostate Christianity! Oh, modern Christendom! Thou, that corruptest all nations with thine abominations, and makest merchandise of the souls of men! Oh! that thou didst but know the day of thy visitation,—the hour of God's judgments,—and wouldst awake from the awful slumber of ages! But alas! Thine eyes are closed, no more to be opened, until they are lifted up in torment, in the midst of lamentations, and woes, and miseries, and hopeless despair.

Seventh.—*The rights, privileges, and blessings, promised to the faithful obedient subjects in a future life.*

Eternal life is the greatest of all the gifts of God. It is a blessing promised to all the faithful subjects of his kingdom. The hopes of a future life of happiness that will never end, serve to comfort and cheer them through all the sorrows and tribulations of the present life. We shall endeavour to point out the nature of that eternal life, promised to the children of the kingdom. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.) It is not enough merely to have a knowledge of the existence of the Father and Son; but to know them aright is to understand their character,—their attributes,—their glory,—and the nature of the laws which they have ordained for the government of all happy, glorified, and intelligent beings. Such knowledge, when once obtained, is eternal life. Eternal life is not merely to believe on the testimony of others in the existence and attributes of God, but it is to obtain something more than a belief; it is to obtain a certain knowledge. Such knowledge can only be obtained by direct and immediate revelation. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the

Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will REVEAL him." (Matthew xi. 27.) All men can believe in the existence of God on the testimony of others; but no man can know God only by revelation.

Hear this, ye that deny new revelation, and, fear and tremble for yourselves; for you can in nowise inherit eternal life, without knowing "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent;" and you can in nowise know them without you receive a new revelation. Peter did not obtain his knowledge that Jesus was the Christ, only by a new revelation. Jesus said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew xvi. 17.) No man can know God unless "the Son REVEAL him." Hence, we can perceive, that eternal life can only be enjoyed by a people who believe in, and receive new revelation. All others are in uncertainty and doubt, like the apostate churches, who do not believe in any later revelations than the New Testament, which plainly proves, that they have not attained to the knowledge of God, and therefore, eternal life is not among them.

But the children of the kingdom have a knowledge of both the Father and the Son through the medium of new revelation; therefore, eternal life is with them. Their happiness and joy in eternal life will increase as their knowledge of the glory, power, wisdom, and goodness of God increases; and this knowledge will increase only through the medium of new revelation. Hence the whole system of salvation and eternal life, and the increase of knowledge and happiness, are founded upon continued revelation to the children of the kingdom throughout all ages in this world, and in all worlds to come.

WE have in this treatise briefly touched upon some of the most important subjects connected with the kingdom of God. We shall now proceed to give a summary statement of some of the leading arguments contained in the foregoing.

1.—We have endeavoured to point out the nature and character of the great Supreme governing Power of the universe, consisting of the Father the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The person of the Father consisting of a most glorious substance, called Spirit, which we have shown must have extension and parts, and consequently must be material. Without these qualities no substance could exist.

The Son is in the express image of the Father, and is also a material being. The same material body that was crucified and laid in the tomb, arose again. The same flesh—the same bones were reanimated by the same material spirit. This glorious compound of flesh, and bones, and spirit—all material, ascended into heaven to dwell in the presence of the glorious personage of the Father, of whose express image and likeness he was the most perfect pattern. Therefore, from the description given of Jesus we are irresistibly led to the conclusion, that both he and the Father must appear, so far as it relates to form and size, very much like man. If then, both of these glorious personages are about the size of man, they must, like man, occupy a finite space of but a few cubic feet in dimension: and, according to the admitted truths of philosophy, no substance can be in two or more places at the same time, therefore neither the Father nor Son can, consistently with those truths, be in two places at once. Revealed truths never will contradict any other truths. The revealed truths contained in the bible, inform us that God is everywhere, sustaining and upholding all things, and that in him we live, and move, and have our being. How can these important truths of divine revelation be reconciled with other admitted truths of philosophy which are equally certain? They can be reconciled in no way only by admitting the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit. This all-powerful substance extends throughout the material universe, uniting and mingling with all other matter in a greater or less degree, not absolutely filling all space, for then there would be no room for other matter, but like the rays of light or heat, existing in different degrees of density in different parts of space. By it all things are governed in the most perfect order and wisdom, according to the will of the Father and the Son. This view of the subject does not necessarily do away a personal Spirit, acting in conjunction with the other two persons of the Godhead; for myriads of personal Spirits could be organized out of the inexhaustible quantities which exist, and still an abundance would

be left to govern and control the various departments of the universe where those personages could not always be present.

2.—We have clearly shown that apostles, prophets, and all other officers of the kingdom of God, must be called and ordained by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and that without new revelation these officers never could be qualified to perform the various duties of their calling. We have also proved that the officers of the kingdom have the authority to administer the word, the water, and the Spirit, according to certain conditions, and through certain ordinances in the name of Jesus.

3.—We have pointed out the great scriptural plan of salvation, and the conditions to be complied with on the part of man. These conditions are, faith, a humble repentance, an immersion in water for the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, and a strict observance of every other requirement of heaven, even unto the end.

4.—We have proved from the dealings of God with his people in all ages, that continued revelation is absolutely necessary for the well-being of the church, and for its existence among men;—that new circumstances are constantly requiring new information from heaven, adapted to these circumstances; and that the church in one age never could learn its whole duty from revelations given to the church in a former age.

5.—We have urged the Saints to cultivate such a disposition and character as would best correspond with the word and spirit of Christ.

6.—We have clearly shown from the word of God that all the supernatural gifts of the Spirit, the miraculous signs promised to believers, and every blessing promised under the gospel dispensation, are all necessary in the church *now*, and should be earnestly sought after by all the faithful Saints;—and that no church have any reason or scripture by which they can possibly suppose themselves to be the church of Christ, unless they believe in and enjoy those miraculous powers.

7.—The word of God, promises to all who faithfully adhere to the laws and ordinances of the kingdom—a paradise of rest—a glorious resurrection—an eternal life of happiness—and an everlasting inheritance upon the new earth, where they shall reign as kings and priests for ever and ever. These are the subjects which we have endeavored to elucidate in this small treatise. They are subjects with which every man throughout the world should be well acquainted, however imperfect they may have been set forth in the foregoing pages, they are none the less important.

The Almighty has decreed to rend and break in pieces all earthly governments—to cast down their thrones—to turn and overturn, and break up the nations—to send forth his messengers, and make a way for the establishment of the everlasting kingdom to which all others must yield, or be prostrated never more to rise. Awake then, O ye nations, for with you, the Lord hath a controversy! His kingdom is now for the last time organized upon the earth—all nations are invited to become citizens—it is the only government of safety or refuge upon all the earth—it hath its seat in the everlasting mountains—its dreadful majesty shall strike terror to the hearts of kings in the day of his power! Awake, for troublous times are at hand! Nations shall no longer sit at ease! The troubled elements shall foment, and rage, and dash with tremendous fury! A voice is heard unto the ends of the earth! A sound of terror and dismay! A sound of nations rushing to battle—fierce and dreadful is the contest—mighty kingdoms and empires melt away! The destroyer has gone forth—the pestilence that walketh in darkness. The plagues of the last days are at hand, and who shall be able to escape? None but the righteous,—none but the upright in heart—none but the children of the kingdom. They shall be gathered out from among the nations—they shall stand in holy places, and not be moved! But among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices, and curse God because of his sore judgments, and die. And there shall be a voice of mourning and lamentation unto the ends of the earth; for the cup of the indignation of the Almighty shall be poured out without mixture of mercy, because they would not receive his messengers, but hardened their hearts against the warning proclamation—against the gospel of the kingdom—and against the great preparatory work for the universal reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

15, Willon Street, Liverpool, July 14th, 1849.

R. JAMES, PRINTER, 39, SOUTH CASTLE STREET, LIVERPOOL.